

**Intervention given  
by Ms. Ivana Biková  
NFP of the Czech Republic to the UNCCD,  
UN CSD-16, New York, USA, 8 May 2008, afternoon session**

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Madame Chair,

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Czech Republic fully associates with the statement made by Slovenia on behalf of the European Community and its Member States.

Even though the Czech Republic is not affected by desertification, it is fully aware of the seriousness of drought and desertification and the related socio-economic impacts, such as poverty, hunger, migration and limited access to water resources.

As a member of the OECD and European Union it ranges among so-called emerging donor countries and through ODA provides assistance to the affected developing countries.

The implemented ODA projects have great importance for the recipient countries – they contribute to poverty reduction, environmental protection, economic and social development and thus contributes to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

At the regional level, the Czech Republic, as an active Party of the Annex V of the Convention dealing with the specific conditions of the Central and Eastern European Region, established and financially supports a Regional Reference Center (RRC) called “Soil conservation strategies and planning”, which serve to 23 country partners of that region. This center provides information on available sources of information in the area of soil degradation and conservation, provides linkages with other information databases within the region and contributes to sharing of the best practices and lessons learnt (<http://rrc.mendelu.cz>).

Despite a significant amount of expertise to share, the financial resource mobilization for the combating land degradation, desertification and drought remains a major problem for the affected countries of the Central and Eastern European region. The Czech Republic as an emerging donor in the region has decided to support the regional initiative of the UNCCD Secretariat and the Global Mechanism and in September 2008 will convene a workshop on mobilization of financial resources for strengthening the UNCCD implementation.

This regional initiative is significant in terms of initiating an important process in the region to put a focus on the Convention as a tool for addressing

sustainable development and more specifically to look at the implication of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance implementation of the Convention (2008 – 2018) adopted at the 8<sup>th</sup> session of the COP in September 2007 from the angle of mobilizing and allocating financing.

We believe that the outcomes of the workshop will be valuable and will feed the follow up discussions in the framework of both, the CSD and UNCCD, processes and that such a regional initiative might be inspiring for other regions.

Thank you.